United Nations S/2002/443

Security Council

Distr.: General
18 April 2002

Original: English

Letter dated 18 April 2002 from the Permanent Representative of Georgia to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

Upon instruction of my Government, I have the honour to transmit herewith the statement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia regarding the escalation of the situation in Abkhazia, Georgia.

I should be most grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Peter P. **Chkheidze**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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Annex to the letter dated 18 April 2002 from the Permanent Representative of Georgia to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

18 April 2002

Statement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia

Following the withdrawal of Russian Special Forces on 13 April 2002, in accordance with the agreement between the sides, from the Upper Kodory Valley, the Government of Georgia considered the incident to have been resolved and declared that efforts had to be directed towards revitalizing the peace process.

Unfortunately, despite this position, attempts are still being made to destabilize the situation in the conflict zone. In particular, representatives of the Russian Federation and the Abkhaz side continue to accuse the Georgian side in breaching the existing agreements. On numerous occasions overt threats of possible renewal of fighting were made. The Georgian side resolutely declares that such accusations are entirely unfounded. According to the agreement signed on 2 April of this year, in the Upper Kodory Valley there is not a single unit of the Ministry of Defence of Georgia. This can easily be verified by the mechanisms envisioned in the same agreement. Thus, the concentration of military forces near the Kodory Valley is aimed at defeating the peace process and stalling the United Nations proposed mechanism for activating the negotiations process.

According to our information, under the pretext of these false accusations, Abkhaz armed units and military equipment are being concentrated along the adjacent territories of the Kodory Valley and the Tkvarchli region, including near the villages of Merkheuli and Tsebeldi in the vicinity of the peacekeepers block-posts, mandated to control the entrance to the Valley.

Still considering that there is no alternative to a peaceful settlement of the conflict in Ab hazia, Georgia, the Georgian side will spare no effort to prevent the escalation of violence in the region and declares that, in the case of further deterioration of the situation, the responsibility will lay solely upon the organizers of possible provocations and the Russian peacekeepers.